United States Department of State

*Washington, D.C. 20520*

Dear Mr. Azzam:

Thank you for your recent letter expressing the Islamic Council's compilation of views on the Gulf crisis. I have been asked to respond on behalf of the President.

As President Bush has stated, the U.S. response to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait reflects a strong international consensus demanding the implementation of all relevant UN Security Council resolutions which inter alia require:

the immediate, complete, and unconditional withdrawal of all Iraqi forces from Kuwait;

the restoration of Kuwait's legitimate government;

the security and stability of Saudi Arabia and the Persian Gulf; and

the protection of Americans and other foreign nationals held hostage by Iraq, both in Iraq and Kuwait.

Twenty-eight nations, including the United States, have sent troops or material to the Gulf in support of these Security Council Resolutions. By reversing Saddam Hussein's aggression, we and the rest of the peace-loving world seek to help define the world that lies beyond the Cold War as a place where civilized rules of conduct apply and larger states are not permitted to devour their smaller neighbors.

In our view, Saddam Hussein offers no help in resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict by continuing to occupy Kuwait. As President Bush noted in his U.N. address, there may be new opportunities to address the Arab-Israeli issue once the current crisis has passed. In the meantime, any attempt to link the two issues will only further complicate each.

Mr. Salem Azzam
Secretary General
Islamic Council
16 Grosvenor Crescent
London SW1 7EP
United Kingdom

I hope that this information is useful in clarifying U.S. government policy. We share your desire for cooperation, understanding and good relations between the United States and the Arab and Islamic peoples.

Sincerely,

Allen L. Keiswetter
Director
Office of Regional Affairs
Bureau of Near Eastern and
South Asian Affairs

المجلس الإسلامي
Islamic Council

President George Bush
The White House
Washington, D.C.
U.S.A.

31 October, 1990

Mr. President,

I am addressing this communication to you in my capacity as Secretary General of the London - based Islamic Council; a non-governmental organisation which was established by a group of Muslim thinkers, statesmen and representatives of Islamic Movements and Organisations from all over the world. Its formation was formally announced at an international conference held in Paris by the Council on September 22, 1982.

Before proceeding further, I wish to state that over the years the Islamic Council has established close links with the people in the Arab and Islamic world and can claim to know and reflect the real views and thinking of the masses.

It is a fact, Mr. President, that the Arab and Islamic peoples wish to have cooperation, understanding and good relations with America, based on the lofty founding principles of your great country.

In recent months, the Islamic Council made strenuous efforts to determine, through extensive contacts and discussions with leaders of public opinion and important personalities in public life, the real views and thinking of the people about issues stemming from the Gulf crisis. I present these to you in the following paragraphs and hope that they will receive your serious and sympathetic consideration.

1. The U.S. and Western military force has been deployed in the Gulf neither to defend the international law

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nor interests of the people of the region.

2. The principal aim of the military build-up is the seizure by the West of the Gulf oil, the most valuable asset of the Gulf states.

3. Another aim of the military build-up is to perpetuate the regimes in the oil-producing Gulf states where a handful of people control the oil wealth of the concerned nations.

4. There is wide-spread anger and dismay among the Arab and Islamic peoples about the glaringly discriminatory stand of American government.while America and its Western allies are willing to use military force against Iraq for not implementing United Nations' resolutions, they have consistently ignored Israel's contemptuous and arrogant rejection of numerous U.N. resolutions against Israel which had overwhelming support of the member states. Not only this but America has been rewarding and continues to reward Israel with massive military, political and economic aid, ignroing totally Israel's most brutal treatment of the Arab & Islamic peoples in Israel and the occupied territories.

5. The Arab and Islamic peoples are convinced that America's willingness to attack Iraq has nothing to do with the latters occupation of Kuwait. The belief is reinforced by the fact that America and its Western allies have been ignoring Israel's occupation of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and Golan Heights for the last 23 years inspite of U.N. Resolution 242 which demanded Israel's withdrawal from the said territories.

6. The people consider the Muslim regimes supporting the American forces in the Gulf as collaborators.

7. According to Islam, the regimes in the Gulf have no legitimacy; nor do they conform to the democratic principles so highly valued and advocated by the West. Moreover, there is a great gulf between these regimes and the people. But, unfortunately, it is such regimes in the Muslim world which the West supports.

8. The current stand taken by America is meeting with very strong opposition in the hearts and minds of the Arab and Islamic peoples. Even though it does not appear clear at the moment, it is a fire which is smoulding.

9. An attack on Iraq would have an immensely serious impact on the hearts and minds of the Arab and Islamic people. It could be a major factor in provoking revolutions against the regimes cooperating with America. The events now taking place in the Gulf are viewed by the people as blatant return to old colonialism and gunboat diplomacy by the Western powers, which they thought had died for ever.

10. The Arab and Islamic response in the event of an attack on Iraq would be violent and widespread and harmful to interests of the West, in particular the U.S.A.

Mr. President, the above facts are being brought to your attention with the best of intentions and in the hope that you will take them into account in determining the use of the military option against Iraq.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

Salem Azzam

Salem Azzam
Secretary General